

COLLECTING BREASTMILK

Your breastmilk is the best milk for your baby. If you can't be with your baby, you can collect your breastmilk by using hand expression or a breast pump.

How do I help my milk flow?

Your milk flows naturally when your baby is breastfeeding. Try these ideas to help your milk flow:

- Relax and think about your baby.
- Put a warm cloth on your breasts for several minutes.
- Massage your breasts for a few minutes. Use your fingertips to make small, gentle circles. Massage from your chest out to your nipple, moving around your breast.

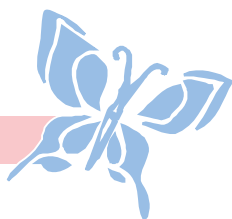
Tips for collecting your breastmilk

- Allow enough time so you won't feel rushed.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- Express milk in a quiet, comfortable place.
- If you are using a breast pump, follow the pump manufacturer's directions.
- Milk expression should never be painful. If it is, you should stop and get help with milk expression.

The amount of milk you will get each time you express your breastmilk will depend on your current milk supply, the type of pump you are using and if you are relaxed to help your milk flow. Your baby is able to remove milk from your breasts better than hand expression or pumping.

Give yourself time to learn hand expression

When you are first learning and not trying to save milk, practice hand expression in the shower. Or try expressing when your breasts feel extra full. In the beginning, you may express only a few drops. Each time you practice it will get easier and you will get more milk.



How do I hand express my milk?

Place your fingers and thumb about 1 inch behind the nipple. Press back toward your chest; then roll your thumb and fingers toward the nipple. Collect your milk in a clean container. Move your hand around your breast and continue to drain milk from all parts of your breast.

Continue until the flow of milk slows down then express from the other breast. Express from both breasts 1 or 2 more times. This will take about 20-30 minutes.

Choosing a breast pump

A breastfeeding specialist or your doctor can help you choose the pump that is best for you.

- *Hand or manual pumps* are for short-term or occasional pumping. Some need two hands to operate, others only need one hand. Bulb type pumps should not be used.
- *Pedal pumps* work like a hand pump but uses the stronger muscles of the leg and foot.
- *Small electric or battery-operated pumps* are for short term and occasional pumping. They are small, lightweight and portable. Some are available with double pumping kits.
- *Automatic electric pumps* are specially designed to closely imitate a baby sucking and are best for long term and frequent pumping. Mothers who work full time or are having trouble with breastfeeding are encouraged to use an automatic electric pump. Double pumping cuts pumping time in half and stimulates more milk production than single pumping. Automatic electric pumps can be rented.

